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RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE 0328  
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8893  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE IMMEDIATE 2337  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 1722  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE  
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 000098

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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/CACEN AND EUR/RPM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/31/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: FIGHT OVER U.S. LED TO IBRAGIMOV,S RESIGNATION

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Classified By: Ambassador Marie L. Yovanovitch, for reasons 1.4 (c) AND (d).

WHAT HAPPEND?  
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11. (C) On January 30, Ambassador met with the President's former Foreign Policy Advisor Ermek Ibragimov, who unexpectedly resigned on January 23. Ibragimov said the press report that the President had "released him from his position in connection with an appointment to another position" was incorrect. Ibragimov had resigned because of a severe argument he had with State Secretary Madumarov during the week of January 15 over Kyrgyz policy towards the U.S. Ibragimov did not provide specifics, but said that he had advocated good relations with all countries and specifically the U.S. Madumarov disagreed, and Ibragimov said that is when he realized that he had been mistaken about Madumarov. (Previously, Ibragimov had told us that Madumarov played a positive role in the PNG issue and encouraged us to cultivate a relationship with Madumarov.)

12. (C) On the one hand, Ibragimov said his resignation was a long time coming, because he was concerned about internal developments in Kyrgyzstan, the way the country is being governed, and the manner in which former Prime Minister Kulov was treated. But his actual resignation was precipitous and became inevitable when Ibragimov said that he realized that he could not stay on at the White House, if he had quarreled so fiercely with one of the President's closest advisors. Ibragimov turned in his resignation at noon on January 23, and on January 30, President Bakiyev unexpectedly called him in for a chat. He said the two parted amicably, and Bakiyev offered him several plum positions: Ambassador to Moscow, Astana, or Brussels. Ibragimov later commented that if Acting Foreign Minister Jekshenkulov gets fired, Ibragimov could likely become a Deputy Foreign Minister. He added, however, that he thought Jekshenkulov would stay on, and that he would not work for Jekshenkulov.

PRIME MINISTER ISABEKOV: THE WORST CHOICE  
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13. (C) Ibragimov said that Isabekov is uneducated, inexperienced and unprepared to be Prime Minister. In short, he was "the worst choice." Isabekov knows the President well and is a "comfortable" choice, who will do exactly as he is told. He noted that there is a "small chance" that Isabekov's government will get its act together and lead decisively, but he acknowledged that if Isabekov is not an independent actor, this is unlikely. He noted that Isabekov's appointment is part of a general trend in the White House of putting unqualified people in charge. Ibragimov expressed his own frustration at learning of Presidential decisions that came out of the blue and were clearly unproductive, but that someone, perhaps a family member, had advocated. While he was not very optimistic, Ibragimov concluded that it was too early to judge how the new government would behave, as it was not yet even clear who would be in the Cabinet.

COMMENT  
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14. (C) We report the above as a window into the Kyrgyz White House, but note that Ibragimov was putting his own spin on the events he recounted. That said, he is one of our best interlocutors and we will miss his influence in the White House. Ibragimov was not particularly powerful, but he was sympathetic to our concerns and quietly steered issues into the right direction. He is unsure of who will replace him, but seemed quite confident that Jekshenkulov would remain at the MFA (contrary to everything else we are hearing.) When Ambassador asked who are the friends of the United States in Kyrgyzstan? Ibragimov laughed and said we had friends - just not very many, but was then hard pressed to come up with a list. When Ambassador asked what the U.S. could expect regarding the bilateral relationship if those around the President are advocating against it, Ibragimov said he did

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"not exclude" the possibility that relations could worsen, but it was still too early to tell. END COMMENT.  
YOVANOVITCH